**Press Release**

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**ACTIVIST TAKES ON DRUG GIANT OVER LITTERING IN AD**

TORONTO (January 29, 2014) – Toronto litter prevention expert Sheila White is taking on big guns Pfizer and Young & Rubicam over a national television advertising campaign in Canada that portrays a woman littering.

White, founder of litterpreventionprogram.com, has complained to the giant Pfizer pharmaceutical company about its television commercial for nicotine replacement therapies, running until March in both English- and French-Canadian markets.

It features a female smoker returning to the high school where she first started smoking cigarettes. At the end, she stubs her cigarette butt on the steps of the school.  White wants that image of littering altered and replaced, or the ad substituted or pulled. Pfizer Canada says that’s not going to happen.

“Littering is unlawful in Canada and around the world,” White says. “This commercial showing a woman smoking on school property and leaves the impression that littering is acceptable. Towns and cities everywhere struggle with the butt litter problem.  Ads like these contribute to the problem we face as educators in litter prevention dedicated to reducing the rate of littering.”

White says creators of the ad at Young & Rubicam could easily have instructed the actor to extinguish the cigarette end in a pocket ashtray or street receptacle.  She is frustrated that the ad will continue to run without changes.

“We want the message to be, ‘if you can’t quit smoking at least quit littering’,” White said. “Litter is a huge environmental problem that deserves some respect and attention from big-moneyed advertisers.”

White wants advertisers, their agencies and regulators in Canada to consider littering as offensive under “unacceptable depictions and portrayals”, Section 14 of the code set by the Canadian Advertising Standards Council, a self-regulatory body.  Advertising shall not “undermine human dignity; or display obvious indifference to, or encourage, gratuitously and without merit, conduct or attitudes that offend the standards of public decency prevailing among a significant segment of the population,” Section 14(d) of the code states.

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